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THE
DISSENTERS
ANSWER
TO THE
High-Church Challenge.



London, Printed in the Year 1704.

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Dissenters Answer
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AS it is the Character of the Devil to bring a Railing Accusation, so no Man of Sence or Manners cares to imitate him ; all Men of Learning, that ever I met with, will allow that People may Differ, Debate and Dispute, without *Bil-linggate* Language ; that Invidious Names, and Indecent Reproaches, serve to gratifie the Spleen, and flow from a Redundancy of Gall in the Author, but add no manner of Force to his Argument ; good Words are as strenuous as bad ; and the Satyr lyes in the Truth, not the ill Language, of the Book.

From this Principle, the Author of a late Pamphlet, with a Title as long as a Book, and call'd, *The Wolf Stript*, must not expect a Return of Dirt for Dirt ; and while he calls every Man by his Name, and yet is asham'd of

his own, calls most Men out of their Names, and fills his Book with the Exuberance of his Hypochondriack Vapours, he ought to be look'd upon as an Author not worth while to meddle with; if a Gentleman should fight with a Chimney-sweeper, he may beat the Man, but he will daub himself so much, will stink of the Soot, and foul his Cloaths, that the Victory is not worth the Disorder 'twill put him into.

In like manner, he that will deal with this Author in his own Way, must foul his Mouth with so much Bear-Garden Language, such rude, unmannerly, and unscholar-like, Behaviour, that he must be tainted with the ungrateful Savour of his Enemy's Malignancy, and look like the Man he meddles with as not worth any Man's while.

Upon this Account I shall not meddle with his Voluminous Tract it self; but as he has made a fair Challenge in the Eighth Page of his Book to all the Dissenters, I am willing to enter a little in the Case; not so much expecting to silence a Tongue pointed with Raillery, but to let the World know that the Dissenters are not unprovided with strong Arguments to defend a just Cause.

The Challenge that this Gentleman has made to the World, and of which he seems so very confident, is as follows.

The

The Dissenters make a Heavy Noise, That the Church will not Purchase a Reconciliation, with the giving up only of a few Indifferent Things, which Offend their Tender Consciences.

And the Low-Church lay the Blame upon the High-Church, (with very severe Reflections) That they are Obstructors of this Blessed Union.

Now let none of these be Judges in their own Cause. Therefore let the Dissenters give in to the Present Convocation a List of such Indifferent Things, which, if Granted, they will Promise to Conform, and Heal the Schism. The Scruples are Theirs. Therefore they must make the Proposal. None others can tell what will Satisfie them.

If they will not do this, Let them stop their Clamours, and Never more say, That nothing will be Granted them! And that the Church of England has no mind to Heal the Schism!

But if they will do this, then it will appear, Whether the High or the Low-Church will go Farthest to Purchase this Desir'd Reconciliation; and which of them do, in good Earnest, Wish it, and not rather to keep open the Breach, to serve other Designs!

Next, let those of the Convocation, who were formerly Employ'd in this Grand Project of Reconciliation, (of which they have made such Boasts) lay before the House the Grounds and the Terms of it; that it may appear they were none but Indifferent Things, which were to be Given up to the Dissenters! Otherwise, let Them too Cease their Railing at the High-

High-Church, as Men of Violent Spirits, &c. for Obstructing their Designs! Or, for Suspecting what they were!

The High-Church Desire, That they, and the Low-Church, and the Dissenters too, may be Try'd by their Actions, and not by the Clamours on either Side. And that they may be Heard Publickly, in the Face of the World, by the Method Propos'd.

And Whoever Refuse this, and cannot Propose a more Rational and Convincing Way, for the Clearing of Themselves, let Them be Guilty.

Had this been a new Challenge, this Author might have had some Reason to have expected it should have been accepted and replied to.

But since I find his Reading as short as his Censure is hasty, I think the properest Method is to revise what of this Kind has been already done, and to put him in Mind that all he has said only ends in this Absurdity of arguing, viz. The Dissenters have already been challeng'd to this, have accepted the Challenge, undertaken the Defence of their Doctrine, and of their Dissenting, have effectually vindicated themselves from the Charge of Schism, given Reasons for their Scruples, and made Proposals for Conformity; they have challeng'd the Church to Union and Peace, they have defended themselves

selves from the Charge of Disloyalty and Rebellion, and offered the Church to bring their Loyalty to the Test with them ; and none of these things have ever been Answer'd, or some of them not so much as Reply'd to.

Now as this Gentleman supplies Matter of Fact with Indecency and Railery, I shall not need to follow him there ; he begins the very first Page of his Book with Three positive Falsities, neither of which he can in the least tollerable manner make out.

First, That they have a Society of Writers.

Secondly, That the Dissenters find themselves worsted in Argument.

In the same Page he tells us, *Tis the Method of the Dissenters not to mind any Answer, but to repeat and repeat their own Objections IN INFINITUM.*

'Tis far from my Design to Reply to a Book as full of Absurdities and Contradictions as it is Verbose and Malignant, and therefore I shall content my self with these Three Instances.

As to the Dissenters having a Society of Writers, I am so well satisfied of its being a Forgery of his own, that I Challenge him to make

make appear that there is so much as a Correspondence among them of any Two together that have ever Wrote in the Behalf of the Dissenters; and as he is mighty forward to print Names, and to abuse them by Name too, he is welcome to set down their Names if he can: In which, if he pursue his usual Method of presuming things are so, and then affirming it as positively as if he could prove it, he will certainly Ensnare and Expose himself as much in the Particulars as he has done now in the General.

Had the Dissenters so much Unanimity among themselves, as he pretends they have, they would have too great a share in the Publick Regard, to let such a hard-mouth'd Author Treat them in so Scurrilous a Manner as he does; the Government would suppress the Spirit of Railery in the Mouths of these Enslamers, that they should not have such a full Liberty of Traducing and Abusing their Brethren, in order to keep open the Breach, which is every True English Protestant's Desire and Interest to see healed.

No, Sir, the Dissenters have no such Societies; the Spirit of Union, the more Unhappy for them, is not so much among them; they are all forward enough to have any Body serve them, but it must be at their own Hazard, and at their own Expence, which a late

late unhappy Author of theirs very lately had Experience of enough to warn any Man from venturing to serve them again.

But therefore, Sir, is it plain that this Book is far from being Wrote as a Design of the Party, but with the Sence of Truth, which every Honest Man has a Right to Vindicate.

At the same time, Sir, I affirm your Party has, and ever had, a Society of Writers; and whenever you desire it, I am ready to gratifie you with some of their Names; tho' I am not forward of printing Names, as a piece of Rudeness unbecoming an Author: But a certain Weekly Paper now in Course is Publickly own'd to be so wrote; and I know Personally, that the wretched Performance has occasion'd some Considerations among People of greater Capacities, to provide a Set of Men to do it better, and to gratifie them for the Service.

But, Sir, I shall not enter upon the tedious Work of Recrimination, as a thing in which there is so much room for launching out, that the compass of this small Tract would be too straight for it.

2. You tell us, *The Faction*, which is your Civil Term for the Dissenters, *find themselves worsted in Argument.*

It had been time enough to have boasted thus when you had put your Armour off, and

When the many Tracts wrote by the Dissenters in their own just Vindication have been Answer'd.

But this Gentleman has the Misfortune so to be blinded by his Passion, as to cry *Victoria* before the Battle is ended; and not to trouble you, Sir, with many Negatives, I wish you would let us see *one Time* whenever by any thing but Railery you *worsted* the Dissenters.

We confess, Sir, that at ill Language you have the better of us; whether you have any Professors of the Scolding Talent among your Students we know not, for you will not suffer us to be Taught in your Universities; but we assure you, that in those Schools where we are fain to bring up our Youth, we Teach no such Science.

But as if all you had laid down on that Head were true, and you were very certain that you had worsted the Dissenters in Argument, you give them a home Charge. That 'tis their Method not to mind Answers, but to Repeat and Repeat their own Objections In Infinitum.

Now, Sir, This may or may not be true, according as you can or cannot give a Genuine Answer to the following Account of Answers given, and Books written; by Dissenters in their own Vindication, which you,

nor

not any of your Church, have ever yet thought fit to venture an Answer to, and when you can you may defend your Church from unfair Treatment of the Dissenters in point of Argument on this Head.

And not to go too far beyond the Memory of those we are talking to, I think there stands Two Books of the Learned Mr. Clarkson yet unanswered, the one Entituled, *No Scripture Evidence for Diocesan Bishops*; and the other, *A Discourse of Liturgies*. 'Tis true, there is a long and learned Discourse of Dr. Comber's then Precentor of York, wherein with some of our Author's Spirit, Treating the Memory of Mr. Clarkson neither like a Gentleman nor a Scholar, tho' all Men know he was as much of both as ever the Nation bred; and tho' a Dissenter, had the Honour to be Tutor to the Learned and most Excellent Dr. Tillotson, late Archbishop of Canterbury.

After this Author has pleased himself with sufficiently reproaching his Deceased Antagonist, he goes on to rummage Antiquity to prove that Liturgies were in use in the Primitive Church. This was one part of the Dispute; and had not the Doctor overlooked it in his haste, Mr. Clarkson had Anticipated his whole Discourse in p. 1. 'Whether Liturgies, or Forms of Worship and Administration, &c.

' were in use in the Primitive Church or not;
 ' is no part of the present Dispute. in judgment
 ' But whether these Liturgies were pre-
 ' scrib'd and Impos'd as Terms of Communion
 ' this is the Question.

Now to this Question the Dr. is not pleas'd
 to say one Word, as I can observe, in his whole
 Book, but goes on to prove that to be true
 which Mr. *Clarkson* granted, and lets that a-
 lone which he deny'd.

Nay, so Ridiculous was this Answerer in
 the Management of himself, both in the
 Search of Antiquity, and in rendring those
 Authors he Quotes, that a Learned Minister
 of the Church of *England*, merely with a re-
 spect to Justice and Learning, Reply'd to
 him, and made it appear that the Doctor did
 not so much as understand the Language of
 the Quotations. This was Mr. *Samuel Bold*,
 Rector of *Steeple* in *Dorsetshire*.

This, I suppose, is some Peoples Way of
 Answering the Dissenters; and if this may
 pass for Answering, they are Answer'd in-
 deed. But I must take the Freedom to say, It
 has yet remain'd unprov'd, that ever a Strict
 Literal Compliance to any Prescrib'd Form
 of Worship and Administration of Sacraments
 was Impos'd as the Term or Condition of
 Communion in any Branch of the Christian
 Church, for above 400 Years after our Sa-
 viour's

vour's time; nay, 'twould be hard to prove it ever done in any Church in the World but ours to this Day; and they are still welcome to make it out if they can; and till they do, the World may judge whether the Dissenters are worsted in Argument, or no.

That there were Bishops in the Primitive Church has also been defended with a great deal of Skill; but as to their Diocesan Royalty and Jurisdiction, they have always, in Prudence, thought fit to let the Dispute of it alone; and I would advise them to do so still, for they must find some other Book to defend it from than the Scripture, and some other Ages of the World to search for the Practice in than that of the Primitive Church.

But I must confess the Dissenters were worsted another Way, in the Case of Dr. Calamy and Mr. Delaun; of which remarkable Story this is the short Abstract.

Dr. Calamy preaching a Sermon at Aldermanbury Church, Entituled, *A Discourse about Scrupulous Consciences*, makes the Dissenters this fair Challenge, as by his printed Sermon, P. appears in these Words: *Could we but prevail with the People diligently to examine the Merits of the Cause our Church would every Day gain Ground amongst all wise Men; for we care not how much Knowledge and Understanding our People have, so they be but Humble and Modest with it: Nor do we desire*
Men

was to become our Phylloxera any further in the
 give them Scripture for it. And in another Place
 he goes on; All we desire of the Dissenters is, that
 they would equally hear both Sides; that they would
 weigh and consider the Arguments that may be propound-
 ed to them; and being indifferent to either Part of the
 Question, would think it no Shame to change their Mind
 when they see good Reason for it.

Mr. Delam, a Man whose Learning and
 Temper were conspicuous to all the Learn-
 ed World; and particularly in the Book he
 wrote, accepts this Challenge, and writes
 down his Reasons for Nonconformity; and
 as the Doctor had printed his Sermon, and
 thereby appeal'd to the World, all Peoples
 Mouths were fill'd with the Fairness of the
 Proposal, and every Body cry'd out, the Dis-
 senters were wofled, Mr. Delam therefore
 thought himself oblig'd to print his Reply.

But as the Victory consist'd, as it does still,
 in Boasts and Rhodomontades, so they were
 as loth to be overcome, as sensible that they
 should be so, and took immediate Care to
 suppress the Book, by seizing the Copy at the
 Printer's; and this was follow'd, by seizing
 the Author for writing a Seditious Libel, put
 him in Prison, fin'd him *Ultra Tenementum*, and
 were hardly prevail'd upon to vouchsafe him
 the Favour to excuse him the Pillory, which
 they

they at last told him in Court was only remitted in respect to his Learning.

Here was a true Church-Conquest; and this Gentleman was persecuted with so much true Church Zeal, that he lay in *Newgate* for his Fine, till he, his Wife and Children, died there, to the Eternal Scandal both of the Church-man and the Dissenters; the one, that he should first challenge a Dispute, and then so basely Treat the Man that accepted it; and the other, that they should not contribute 75 l. to save a Life sacrific'd for their Defence; and such a Life, as, for real Merit, deserv'd infinitely more Regard in a Nation of Humanity and Religion, as we fancy our selves to be.

The Book for which this Gentleman was thus handl'd remains to this Day unanswered by these People, that boast so much of *worshipping the Dissenters*, and they would do well to look back upon that Book, and make some rational Reply to it before they tell us we can shew no Reasons for our Dissenting.

In like manner they proceed still with the Dissenters upon other Points of arguing, as particularly by *Repealing and Repeating In Infinitum* the Charge of Rebellion and Faction, whereas they have been over and over Challeng'd to make out their own Loyalty of Principles or Practice to exceed the Loyalty of the Dissenters.

And

And De Foe's *Test of the Church of England's Loyalty* has receiv'd yet no other Answer than his *Shortest Way*, by a Fine *Ultra Tenementum*, and the reproachful Answer of the *Pillory*. If this be your Way of answering Arguments, Gentlemen, 'tis no wonder you can worst the Dissenters.

To proceed in their usual Method, a worthy Member of the House of Commons has published a Book to vindicate the *Occasional Bill*; and, like those who take Things upon Trust, has affirm'd, that all wise Nations in the World have thought it necessary to entrust the Administration of Publick Affairs in the Hands of such Persons only as are of one and the same Persuasion in Matters of Religion.

A very handsome Way of calling all the Christian World Fools: For I defie him to shew me one of those wise Nations, and to prove it by one Instance, unless where there has not been any Toleration of other Persuasions, the Turks only Excepted.

Thus, Gentlemen, we are worsted by Forgeries and Falsties, not by Arguments; we are challeng'd to Dispute, and then ruin'd for Disputing; ask'd Questions, and then fetch'd up for Answering them. But since this Gentleman has found an Adversary capable to deal with him, *Power and P-----ts excepted*, I leave him

him to say the Dissenters are worsted, when he proves it by a sufficient Reply.

We are now challeng'd to prove that we dissent from the Church in Points so far from being essential, as that the Church cannot be justified in Refusing to abate them; and we are desir'd to give in the Objections to the Convocation.

What Authority their Author has from the Convocation to make this Offer, I know not, and do not see how I shall know it; or whether the Convocation will receive such a List of the indifferent things, or no; but since this bold Challenger would be answered, and will not be satisfied with a General Reply, but this must be spoken to by it self, I crave leave to accept his Challenge as far as the following Particulars reach.

First, I do affirm this has been done already by the whole Body of the Dissenting Ministers in such a Manner, and with such modest Reasons, as several of the Episcopal Clergy were so satisfied with, and did so represent to King Charles the Second, that their Concessions were a sufficient Ground of a Union: VVhat, and who, hindred a Union when the Dissenters made such Concessions, I leave to this Gentleman to tell us, if he cares to expose his Friends so much.

C

Secondly,

Secondly, I do affirm, that if the Church of England would think fit so far to stoop to their Dissenting Brethren, as to abate *such things only*, and *all such*, as are acknowledg'd by themselves to be Indifferent; if it would not reduce us all to such a perfect Union as to Comprehend all Parties, it would yet Embrace so many in the Arms of the Church: It would cause so many to return to the Church among the Dissenters, as would render the Remainder less considerable.

I am to suppose the Challenger in this Matter does not expect I should give in such a List of Alterations as would Reconcile the Quakers, or perhaps not all other Societies; or to tell him what Societies would Conform, and what would not. But I answer him in Reason, if I say for my self, that upon such Concessions I would Conform with all my Heart, and Thousands more, I believe, would do the like.

Since then he has made such an Offer, let us Examine what it is we desire of the Church, what are the Indifferent Things we differ about, and I join Issue with him if the Convocation thinks fit to make these Abatements and Amendments, and we refuse to Conform, then I am content we shall pass for

for a People who are willing to keep open
the Breach, to serve other Designs.

Before I descend to the Particulars, it
is necessary to make some Enquiry into what
I call Indifferent.

1. I call those Things Indifferent which
are not Essential Points of Doctrine, with-
out the Belief of which Practice whereof a Man
cannot obtain Salvation.

2. All things introduced into the Church
of England, either by Warrant or in Dis-
pline, by Homage, Institution, which are
not to be found either by Command or by
Precedent in the Holy Scriptures, which are
the Rule of our Faith.

On this Head of Indifferent Things there-
fore I join Issue with our Author; and if he
thinks fit to present our Humble Address to
the Convocation, that they will be pleas'd
to make such Abatement in the Indifferent
Things following, I am persuaded such
Multitudes of Dissenters will come into the
Church as may very well deserve the Name
of a Union, tho' not of an Universal Con-
formity, and the Number of Remaining Dis-
senter's would be much the smaller.

First of all as to Liturgies, we desire, since it is all Originally Humane, and made by Men Fallible, and of like Passions with our selves, they may suffer such Amendment as are Reasonable and Justifiable from Scripture, and the Practice of the Primitive Church.

Secondly, We desire that after such Amendment, the Minister may not in all Cases be Tied up and Prescrib'd by the Letter of the Book, but may have Liberty to Express himself at large in Prayer, as the present Exigence of the Case may require, and his own Abilities may supply.

Thirdly, We desire the Ordination of Ministers by Presbyters may be allow'd, being Justifiable by Scripture; and that our Ministers may be admitted into Holy Orders without the Re-ordination, and Imposing of Unreasonable Oaths.

Fourthly, We desire the Kneeling at the Sacrament, Bowing at the Name of Jesus, the Cross in Baptism, the Use of the Surplice, and all those Things own'd by the Greatest Masters of the Dispute to be Indifferent, may either be wholly left out, or so left at the Discretion of the People, as that they may not be impos'd upon them without their Consent.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, We desire the Episcopal Hierarchy to be Reduc'd to such a Pitch of Authority as may be justified by the Scripture, and to no other; and we are ready to enter into an Examination with them, what that Particular of Power amounts to, and how far it extends.

I do not say these are all the Heads which I suppose the Dissenters require, but I say these are some of them, and the most Considerable; and if the Church would give such Concessions as were Reasonable on these Heads, the Controversie would soon be decided, Whether the Dissenters separated from the Established Church on frivolous Grounds, or no.

Next, As to Alterations in the Liturgy, 'tis the Avow'd Opinion of the Church of England, that no Church in the World is infallible; and above all, our Church does not pretend to the Title. If then we are not infallible, but subject to Err and Mistake, why should she refuse to Enter into the Cause, whether it is convenient to make any farther or more perfect Reformation or no; but tho' the Consideration were not on a farther Reformation, yet if it were only giving up some smaller

And this latter sort of Love of Christian Peace,
 is very commendable only, but a Due
 Requisite Temper in a Christian Church
 - As to them that blame the Dissenters for
 Separating, let us enquire of them if they are
 not ashamed of wading in the Light, and consequently
 of knowing better what they ought to do,
 than they did before? If then they will sup-
 press this Light, is and refuse to Amend
 Things, tho' the Light of their own Consci-
 ences directs them to it, where lies the
 Charge of Schism? Surely not at their Door,
 who would only pursue a perfect Reason
 on, and think it their Duty to be led to the
 Way, most agreeable to what has Revealed
 in the Scriptures; but as theirs, who would
 oblige them to worship him according to the
 Inventions of Men, by Forms and Methods,
 for which they have neither Warrant, Com-
 mand, or Example, either in the Scripture, or
 the Primitive Practice of the Church; I Appeal
 to all the World, thus as well now as before it is
 not our Faults that they bring the Liturgy
 upon the Stage of Dispute, but the bold
 Challenges of Men that can never make
 good their Arguments: And they ought first
 to have Answered what has been said already,
 before they had Challeng'd us to show New
 Reasons.

Wherefore

Wherefore in the Sense first of the Irresistible Force of what has been said already, and secondly of my Incapacity of saying more to the Purpose, at least in so short a time, I make the Proposers this fair Offer, and they are at Liberty to carry it to the Convocation, for 'tis their Business, not ours.

1. When they will please to Answer Mr. De Laun's *Plea for the Non-conformists*, and the Substantial, yet Unanswerable, Reasons there given for our Dissenting.

2. When they will please to Reply to the Concessions of the Dissenters in the Conference at the *Savoy*, and prove they were not sufficient Grounds of an Union.

3. When they will Confute the Scriptural Authority of Bishop *Usher's Model of Church-Government*, which was much the same with the Scheme the Dissenters presented to King *Charles the Second*, and give the Reasons why the Bishops refused it, *Bart. Life*, cap. 8.

4. If they please to Reply (a little more to the Purpose than Mr. *Osfley* and Mr. *Hoadly* have done) to the Grounds and Reasons of Non-conformity in the 10th Chapter of *Baxter's Life*, *Abridg'd* by Mr. *Calamy*, and to some yet Unanswered Things in Mr. *Calamy's Reply* to Mr. *Hoadly*.

5. If

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5. If they please to give a Rational Answer to the first, Second and Third; Vol. of the *Conformists Plea for the Non-conformists*, wrote by a Member of their own Church, and to *Gillespy's View of English Popish Ceremonies*.

Whenever these things are Soberly and Judiciously Answered, and as Dr. Calamy proposed good Scripture and Reason brought for it, assure your self, Sir, when these Things are Answered, there shall be no manner of need to bring an Occasional Bill to prevent the Alternate Conformity of Dissenters; 'tis most certain, that the far greater Number of them will come in, and become your Christian United Brethren; and till you do these Things, Gentlemen, we Appeal to all the World, who are the Causers of the Schism you speak of, those that all along offered to come in upon Reasonable Conditions, or those that have persecuted us for not complying with Humane Institutions, which are nowhere to be found in Scripture, *which is the only Rule of Faith*.

And thus now the World may see with what Truth these Gentlemen blacken the Dissenters *with their Repeating Objections*, but taking no notice of *Answers*, which I here fairly return upon them, and assure them, that whenever they

they will Answer the Objections in Mr. De
Laan's Book against the Liturgy and Canon
 of the Church of *England*, and prove the same
 to be necessary from Scripture and Reason,
 I will certainly Conform, for I believe and
 own it my Duty to Conform to them if I can,
 and I can never resist Conforming to any thing
 which is prov'd to be my Duty from Reason
 and Scripture.

I think 'tis needless to say much of my
 own, after such Men as these have appear'd
 and gone off the Stage with no Reply; nei-
 ther can I satisfy my self to attempt any
 thing by way of Addition to Men of such
 exalted Learning, till I can see something
 New offer'd upon these Heads, and unless
 these Gentlemen have something to say more
 than has been said before them by Men su-
 perior in Learning to themselves: What they
 now advance favours of an Arrogance pecu-
 liar to themselves, and which I like so ill,
 that I care not to imitate.

I shall therefore think it more than suf-
 ficient thus to tell them what has been said
 already; and if they have any thing to say by
 way of Reply, that demands an Answer,
 they may not want what is needful to justify
 the Practice and Principles of the Dissenters,
 to be such as neither the Charge of Faction or
 Rebellion can be laid at their Doors, and it
 seems

from by this Challenge he would let the World believe that the Church of England would not stand with the Dissenters for small Matters; and I cannot but wonder with what Face he can Publish to the World these following Words, which I am persuaded he has no Authority for from his Superiors.

We should have little Quarrel with the Dissenters about all the Objections they make as to Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgy, and even the Grand Point of Ordination by Presbyters in Cases of Necessity; if it were not for that Falsene Word Schism, if they did not gather Separate Congregations, and set them up in Opposition to the Church, and so form a Schism, they would be no Dissenters, notwithstanding their different Sentiments as to the Points before mentioned. All these are his own Words, P. 3.

Thou Hypocrite, out of thine own Mouth shalt thou be condemned; If you had not Quarrell'd with us about Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgy, and Ordination, there had been no Schism; no Separate Congregations gathered, no breaking off from the Church, no such thing as Dissenters, at least but few among us; and to impose this upon the World after such plain Evidence as has been given to the contrary, deserves a courser Title than I care to foul my Paper with, and evidently shows the Method of the Party who run down the Dissenters by Falsities and Forgeries.

And

And that I may do what these People seldom concern themselves about; I lay it down as a Truth, that when King *Charles* the Second was Restor'd to the Crown, the present Dissenters being then desir'd to Conform to the Church of *England*, and their Ministers having very good Inducement so to do, viz. the Possession of their Livings and Benefices, they were Commanded by the King to give in their Proposals upon which they would Conform.

And 'tis needful to give a short Abstract of the Proceedings in that Case, in Order to let the World see what occasion'd the Schism these People cry so much out of, and to place the Guilt of it where it really lyes; for as the Morality, so the Immorality, of every Action consists in the Principle from whence it proceeds, and the End to which it is design'd.

At the Restoration of King *Charles II.* to put the Dissenters in Hopes that a Reconciliation was intended, Ten or Twelve of the Principal of them were made His Majesties Chaplains; and these desir'g to improve that Opportunity, waited upon him, introduc'd by the Earl of *Manchester*, and humbly recommended to His Majesty the Happiness, and the Opportunity of a Union among his Protestant Subjects in Matters of Religion,

and begging of him that **ONLY NECESSARY THINGS** might be the Terms of Union.

The King declar'd himself very favourably on this Head, profess'd that the Proposal was exceeding agreeable to him, and promis'd them to do his utmost to bring it to pass. Telling them withal, *That this Agreement cou'd not be expected but by abating something on both Sides, and meeting one another in the Mid-way; and that if they were willing to do their Parts, if it was not effected, it should be their own Faults, and not his.*

Here it may very well be observ'd that the Schism lyes directly at the Door of the Church, if the King's Words are true. For the Dissenters did make Offers of meeting half Way, and more than half Way, as shall presently be made out; and if our Brethren of the Church can make out one Step offer'd by them in the most indifferent Circumstance, then ours is the Schism, and not theirs. If not, *Va vobis Hypocrita. Job 15. 6. Thine own Mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own Lips testifie against thee.*

The King after this directed, *That they should bring in Proposals of the utmost they could yield to; and they in return besought His Majesty, That at the same time that they offer'd their Concession to His Majesty, the Brethren on the other side might also bring in theirs, containing the utmost they would abate and yield to in order to Concord; and the King promis'd*

promis'd them it should be so. *Cal. Ab. Baxter's Life*, p. 144

According to this Direction of the King they met and agreed upon a Paper, with a most Humble Address to His Majesty, they make Four Preliminary Requests to the King, and then offer'd their Proposals, an Abstract of which you have in *Mr. Calamy's Abridgment* aforesaid, p. 145. and for the Faithfulness of the Quotation the Reader is referr'd to the Original, which is to be seen in Print.

First, They request, *That serious Godliness might be countenanced; a Learned and Pious Minister in each Parish encouraged; that a Personal, Publick, owning the Baptismal Covenant might precede an Admission to the Lord's Table; and that the Lord's Day might be strictly sanctified.* They offer to allow of the true, ancient, Primitive Precedency in the Church, with a due Mixture of Presbyters, in order to the avoiding the Corruptions, Partiality, Tyranny, and other Evils, which are incident to the Administration of a single Person; the Things which they principally blamed in the *English Frame* were the great Extent of the Bishops Diocess: Their deputing Commissaries, Chancellors, and Officials, to act in their Stead: Their assuming their sole Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, and acting so arbitrarily in Visitation Articles; bringing in new Ceremonies, and suspending Ministers at Pleasure: And for re-
forming

forming these Evils, they proposed, that *Bishop Usher's Reduction of Episcopacy unto the Form of Synodical Government received in the ancient Church* should be the Ground-work of an Accommodation; and that Suffragans should be chosen by the respective Synods: The Associations be of a moderate Extent; the Ministers to be under no Oaths, or Promises of Obedience to the Bishops, as being responsible for any Transgression of the Law; and that the Bishops govern not by Will and Pleasure, but according to Rules, Canons and Constitutions, that should be ratified and establish'd by Act of Parliament. As to the *Liturgy*, they owned the Lawfulness of a prescribed Form of Publick Worship, but desired that some Learned, and Pious, and Moderate Divines of both sorts might be employed either to compile a new *Liturgy*, or to reform the old, adding some other varying Forms in Scripture Phrase, to be used at the Minister's Choice. As to the *Ceremonies* they humbly represented, that the Worship of God was perfect without them; that God hath declared himself in Matters of Worship a jealous God; that the Reformed Churches abroad, most of them rejected the Ceremonies that were reclaimed here; that here in *England* they had ever since the Reformation been Matters of Contention and Dispute; that they had occasioned the silen-

cing

cing of many Pious and Useful Ministers, and given Rise to many Separations from the Church: That they were at best but indifferent, and in there own Nature mutable; and therefore they begg'd that kneeling at the Sacrament might not be imposed, and that the Surplice and the Cross in Baptism, and the bowing at the Name of *Jesus*, rather than *Christ*, or *Emanuel*, might be abolished, and that Care might be taken to prevent future Innovations, contrary to Law; that so the Publick Worship might be free, not only from Blame, but Suspicion.

Does this look like a Proposal from Men that did not dissent, but upon Factionous and Politick Principles? 'Tis hard there shou'd be any Occasion to revive the Discourse of these Things at a Time when we wish for that *Peace and Union* which Her Majesty has so earnestly Invited us to. But these Men of Storms and Heat, who are wilfully ignorant themselves, are willing other Men should be blindly so; and therefore 'tis necessary a little to refresh their Memory, and to shew to the World that this Schism and Separation of the Dissenters was wholly occasion'd by the Church refusing to give up indifferent Things, and imposing those indifferent Things as Terms of Communion upon the Consciences of all the People.

The

The King upon the Ministers delivering in the Proposals and Addreſs Treated them very reſpectfully, ſays the ſame Author, renew'd his Profeſſions of his earneſt Deſires of an Accommodation of the Differences; told them he was well pleas'd that they agreed to a Liturgy, and yielded to the Eſſence of Episcopacy.

Here is an Acknowledgment from the Head of the Church, that the Diſſenters were for an Accommodation, agreed to a Liturgy, and to the Eſſence of Episcopacy, and yet our Modern Men of Peace will throw all the Breach upon the Diſſenters.

Now, Gentlemen, let us examine your Chriſtian High-Church Temper theſe yielding, complying, Diſſenters met with, that we may ſee whether they were out, or were driven out from the Church.

The Diſſenters that were to be for Yet they were not ſo expected, according to their Requeſt, and His Majeſty's Promise, to be met with by the Divines on the other Side, and to ſee their Propoſals, but none appear'd; and after long expecting their Condeſcentions and Compliances, at laſt they receiv'd a Satyrical Answer by way of Reflection to their Propoſals, but not one Word of Condeſcention and Compliance.

As

' As to *Church-Government*, they declare for the
 ' former *Hierarchy* without any Alteration;
 ' and inviduously insinuate, that their Refle-
 ' ctions on the Consequences of a single Per-
 ' son's Administration in the Church, was as
 ' applicable to the Civil State. The *Extent* of
 ' *Dioceſſes* they declare ſuitable enough to the
 ' Bishops Office; and the *Administration of Ecclesi-*
 ' *astical Jurisdiction* by *Chancellors, &c.* Regular in
 ' the Main. Bishop *Uſher's Reduction* they reject as
 ' inconfiſtent with Two other of his Diſcour-
 ' ſes, as being at beſt but a heap of Private Con-
 ' ceptions. The *Liturgy* they applaud as unex-
 ' ceptionable, and think it can't be ſaid to be
 ' too Rigorouſly impoſed, when Miniſters are
 ' not denied the Exerciſe of their Gifts, in
 ' Praying before and after Sermon; which Sort
 ' of Praying, they declare however, is but the
 ' continuance of a Cuſtom of no great Autho-
 ' rity, and grown into Common uſe by Suffer-
 ' rance only, without any other Foundation
 ' in the Laws and Canons. The Reviſing the
 ' *Liturgy* nevertheleſs they yield to, if his Ma-
 ' jeſty thinks fit. As for the *Ceremonies*, they
 ' could not part with one; not being able to
 ' think that the Satisfaction of ſome Private
 ' Perſons was to be laid in Ballance againſt the
 ' Publick Peace, and Uniformity of the
 ' Church. Nay, were any Abatements made,
 ' they are ſatiſfied unquiet Spirits would be
 E ' thereby

• thereby encouraged to make further Demands.

Ecce signum, here's the Foundation of the Dissenters Schism in Three Heads.

Episcopal Hierarchy without Alteration.

Liturgy Unexceptionable, and impossible to be too Rigorously Impos'd.

Ceremonies, not one to be parted with.

Pray, Gentlemen, how long have ye alter'd your Minds, that you can now say you won't quarrel with us for Habits, Ceremonies, or Ordination; and when we offer'd to agree with you in every thing else, you would have your Ordination without Alteration, you would not part with one of the Ceremonies; and thought your Liturgy Unexceptionable, and that it cou'd not be too Rigorously Imposed? How long is it since these Gentlemen have been of a better Opinion? And when all is done, how shall we be sure their Proposal is Genuine, while we have experienc'd so much Falsity and ill-grounded Passion, as before?

Here now is the Picture of a High-Church Challenge, to which we may very well Answer, we are the same that we were when we made the Proposals to King Charles the Second, and we have a great deal of Reason to believe you are the same too. *Ill Nature seldom turns Changling.* 'Tis true, you did promise us
fine

fine things, you promised to come to a Temper with the Dissenters, and declar'd 'twas your Principle to give an Ease to Consciences truly Scrupulous; and upon this Foot you obtain'd upon us to join with you in the Revolution: Now you talk of Honesty, pray, Gentlemen, do us the Favour to let us know in what you ever perform'd that Promise, and when we are to expect it?

Now you shall be put to Trial of your Honesty and Justice, what Commission you had from the Convocation to tell us you would not Differ about *Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgy and Ordination*, I know not, and believe you will be puzzled to produce it: But I venture to say to you from abundance of the Dissenters, *that then you shall differ with us for nothing*; Remit us these and we will Conform to you, and be all One Church and One People.

'Tis about these Things Chiefly you Differ with us; you have no Pretences but these upon us: The Articles of Rebellion Forty One; the *Rye-House Plot*, *Castares's* Evidences, and more: We can allow you all these, and many more than is true, and yet prove that your Principles are as Disloyal, and your Practices have been as full of Rebellion, as ours; you have made as many Insurrections against the Establish'd Governors of the Nation as we; you have made as many Factions

against the Princes and the Laws, took up Arms as often, kill'd as many Kings, or endeavour'd it, as we; and how often have you been Challeng'd to come to a Test of your Loyalty with us? But you are Proof against Argument; and without taking notice of these things, or of any thing else that stands against you, you *Repeat and Repeat* your Railings, and suffer your Tongues to Launch out in a senseless and insignificant manner, *In Infinitum.*

And to help load the Dissenters with Infamy, you Charge them with all that has been done in *Scotland*, where the Arbitrary Tyranny of State Ministers oftentimes made the People Desperate: No wonder if from such Principles you can Charge them with Burning the City of *London*. One would think these Gentlemens Passions should not make them forget their Reason so much as to expose their Proceedings to their own Friends.

Did not the Committee of Parliament fix the Firing of the City upon the *Roman Catholics*, by the irresistible Testimony of the Persons concern'd; and why must the Dissenters do it? Had you brought them by Persecution to such desperate Fortunes, to such Despair, as to set Fire to their own Houses? Were there not almost as many of them Burnt out as of the Church?

The

The ridiculous Fury of these Men is an Answer to themselves ; and upon the whole, I offer to make out, That the Dissenters have, on all Occasions, behav'd themselves with as much Zeal for the Government, as much Sincerity to the Sovereign, and as much Loyalty, as the Church has done, let them begin the Debate when they please.

On the other Hand, I'll prove, That the High Church Party has tyranniz'd over them by all the Illegal, Unchristian, Methods possible, endeavouring to drive them to the Extremities of Despair and Rebellion.

I'll prove by the Preachings, Printings, and declar'd Judgment, of several of the most zealous, High, Party, that however the Practice was disown'd by the Party, upon the unseasonable exposing it, by the Book, call'd, *The Shortest Way* ; yet that it has all along been their Desire, and very often in their Design ; and I appeal for the Truth of it, among many Instances, to a Letter of a known Church-man, whose Original I have by me, being wrote to a Person who sent him the Book for a Present.

S I R,

I Received yours, and enclosed the Book, call'd, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, for which I thank you ; and, next to the Holy Bible, and Sacred

Sacred Comments, I place it as the most Valuable Thing I can have. I look upon it as the only Method, and I pray God to put it into the Heart of our most Gracious Queen to put what is there propos'd in Execution.

Here is the Character of a High-Churchman drawn to the Life; but when in a Post or Two this Gentleman understood it was wrote by a Dissenter, in his next he sends up an Invidious Character of a Whig, and what in his Opinion such a one deserv'd.

And now, Gentlemen, would Reason and Arguments serve for a Reply to you, I should go on with your voluminous Rapfody of Scandal; but really it is so full of Rudeness, and Want of Manners, as well as Want of Truth, that I chuse to let it go, and return to your Challenge about our Conformity; and this you direct us to lay before the Convocation, which I cannot but make some just Exceptions to.

1. I see no Reason to believe the Convocation has given you any Authority to make the Propofal; I cannot but believe that the Convocation knows too well what, and how often, the Dissenters have offer'd the very Thing these Gentlemen propose; the Convocation cannot be ignorant that all Proposals of Amendment and Abatement are Ungrateful and Disagreeable to the Temper of these High-

High-Churchmen; and the Convocation could not be guilty of so much Imprudence to offer that to us now, which we have so often offered them to no Purpose.

2. I see no Reason to believe the Convocation will perform the Conditions these Gentlemen propose, *viz.* to abate the Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgies, and Ordination; and therefore, Gentlemen, you are desired to take back your own Words with this fair Proposal.

Whenever the Church of *England* ceases to quarrel with us about Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgies, and Ordination, we are content that those Dissenters which shall after that refuse to Conform, may be taxed with being unwilling to have the Breach healed, with being obstinate Dissenters, or what you please.

'Tis an unaccountable Assurance in any Author to advance such a Notion to the World; in which, had they Power but of Reflection on themselves, they must of Necessity see they were in the Wrong.

Pray, Gentlemen, what do you think we differ with you for? We hope you are Protestants; we have own'd you a true Church, and that we differ from you in nothing Doctrinal, or absolutely Necessary for Salvation? Will ye keep your Words with us? Then here is your Challenge answer'd.

Get

Get the Convocation to pass it into an Act, that the Church will not quarrel with us about *Habits, Ceremonies, Liturgies and Ordination*, the Schism be upon us if we do not Conform.

If you can't do this, then make us no more Challenges, never write to us to tell you upon what Terms we will Conform; we are ready to Conform upon your own Terms; we take you at your own Words; do but perform what you have voluntarily propos'd, we are your own.

Not but that we have great Reason to say, we know very well that this Offer is neither in your Power, nor in your Nature; not in your Power, as private Men; not in the Nature of your High Church, as a Party.

Nor is it any Breach of Charity to say so, because we have had so much Experience of your Temper on all Occasions in this Matter; and in particular, in the Conferences at the *Savoy*, where the Dissenters made all the Concessions of Charity and Obedience that they were able to do with any Safety to their Consciences; they went through the Common-Prayer-Book, and propos'd only such Amendment as they found absolutely necessary to make it tolerable to them and their Hearers; they offer'd to dispute upon the Amendments they had made, and to justify all their Objections by the Scriptures.

In

In a Word, they offer'd to Conform, so far as they were able to answer it to God, their Consciences, and the World; and he that requires Men to offer more, or else rejects them, and shuts them out of their Communion, wou'd do well to tell us who are the Authors of the Schism.

But after all, these Gentlemen, by what I can perceive, are as ignorant in the thing they call Schism, as they seem to be in other Things; and we have the Testimony of the House of Lords, in which there concurr'd most of the Bishops of the Church of *England*, that *the Dissenters are not Schismatics*. See the Reasons of the Lords against the Bill to prevent *Occasional Conformity*.

And had these Gentlemen bethought themselves when they charge us with this Schism, for separating from the Church, they would have reflected a little on Mr. *Hales*, of *Eaton*, a Sober and Judicious Divine of the Church of *England*, who in his Treatise of Schism lets them know, that separating in Communion from any Particular Church is not a Schism, if the Persons are not separated from the whole Body of Christians; but he that holds the Head, holds fast the Faith, and does not divide in Faith and Doctrine, cannot be said to be guilty of Schism for his refusing to join in Communion with this or that Particular

F Church.

Church. The Church of Christ is that whole Body of Christians, however dispers'd all over the World, who are united to him by Faith, and are the Members composing and join'd to his Mystical Body, professing the same Doctrine and Faith, tho' divided into never so many several Communities, Societies, and other Parts.

If this be to be Schismatics, 'tis plain the Dissenters are no Schismatics: and thus we have the Testimony of the Church Ministers, we have the Vote of the Church of *England* Bishops, and a Majority of the House of Peers, that the Dissenters are no Schismatics.

What shall we say now? If the Dissenters are allow'd by the Church not to be Schismatics; and if the House of Lords concur in the Vote; and if you will not quarrel with us for Habit, Ceremonies, Liturgy or Ordination; *Pray let these Authors tell us what is the Difference among us?* The People may soon be united, for here is little left to dispute of.

What then is it we are treated for in such a scandalous Manner? For what is it we are call'd by Sir H. M. a People unsafe to be trust- ed with any Part of the Administration? In what are we dangerous to the Government? In what is it unsafe to trust us? Why, *Ye are Enemies to Monarchy*, and always plotting against

against the Government, says these Learned and Passionate Authors.

Say you so, Sirs? We will come to an Account of Plots against Monarchy and Government when you will; and whenever we do, you will be found guilty of more than we.

But you have given us a long List of Dissenters Plots, as you call them, and of People executed for them. First of all, I believe 'twould be hard to prove the Dissenters were in a Plot every time some of them were hang'd for it. And we have seen some Church of England Parliaments *Doing them again*, as far as they could, to do Justice to their Posterity. But I shall not ravel into the List of Dissenters Plots at this time; only I cannot avoid telling this Author that he has not given a fair Account of them; the Dissenters, Sir, have been guilty of more Plots against the Government than you charge them with, and more have been executed for it than you tell us of; for I assure you the Author of this wears a Mourning Ring on his Finger, given at the Funeral of Mr. Christopher Love, a Presbyterian Minister, Beheaded *Anno* 1653. for the horrid Pharisick Plot, contriv'd for the bringing in, *as they then call'd him*, Charles Stuart, and the restoring of Monarchy.

And now we come to examine a little this Author's preposterous Motion, that we should

Given our Grievances to the Convocation.
 Why truly, Gentlemen, we have Grievances
 which the Convocation might redress, but
 we don't expect they will, and some of them
 are as follow.

1. 'Tis our Grievance to be falsely accus'd,
 as Mismanagers of the late Reign, when we
 had little or nothing to do in it; as unsafe to
 the Government, when we have all along en-
 deavour'd to uphold it as Enemies to Peace;
 when we challenge all our Enemies to testify
 who has the greatest Zeal for the Publick
 Concord, the Dissenters, or the Church.

2. 'Tis our Grievance to be challeng'd to
 show on what Terms we can Conserve and
 large Concessions offer'd us in the Name of
 the Convocation by Men who are so far
 from having any Authority from the Con-
 vocation, that the Gentlemen of that Assem-
 bly do not think it worth while to own what
 they say, or perform what they promise, in
 their Names, as it certainly is in this Case.

3. It is a Grievance to us, and to the whole
 Nation, that we should at first, to gratifie a
 Party, and to further the State Policy of Trick-
 ing and Designing Men, be driven out, and cast
 off, from the Church-Communion, and the So-
 ciety of Fellow-Christians, for Trifles, and
 Things Indifferent.

And now we come to the second Motion, that we should
 give

Perhaps I am not of so free an Opinion as to the Indifferency of all the Things in which we Differ as the Church themselves; but they are allow'd by the Church themselves to be Indifferent; and they are particularly Indifferent in the Sense of Indifferency explain'd as before; and therefore, *ad hominem*, they are really Indifferent: Even the whole of Church Discipline is so far Indifferent, that whether this or that Model be settled, either Party are allow'd to be capable of Salvation without prejudice to their Belief in that Head; or to speak plain, a Man may go to Heaven in the Practice of either of them, but yet as Conscience directs, ought to have Liberty to Chuse for himself.

But to be cast out of Christian Communion for Trifles, for *such are all the Indifferent Things compar'd to the more Essential Points of Religion*, this is a Grievance; and this is indeed the Original Grievance, and the first Cause of all their Separation, which our Author calls Schism, to impose what they own the Scripture does not impose.

'Tis my Opinion, generally speaking, that no Church can justify keeping out any Person from their Communion for any thing that will not in its own Nature and Circumstances keep him out of Heaven: To keep us out of the Communion of the Church for things

things which you own we may be saved without, will find but slender Authority in the Scripture to Justifie.

But after all, Suppose our Grievances were laid before the Convocation, will this Author assure us of Relief this Way? Will he undertake to tell us any thing the Convocation has done that Way for any Body? Nay, will he be pleased to tell us, whether that Body, who have now Set above Fifteen Years Annually, have done one Act or Thing for the Benefit of the Church they Represent? Will he please to give the World a History of their Actions, and engage to make out they have done any thing but Wrangle among themselves for so long time? These Men of Uniformity, have they had any Uniform Proceedings? *Have they, in short, done any thing worthy of themselves, or the Church they Represent?* If they have, we would be glad to hear it; if they have not, to what Purpose should we apply to them for the Healing our Breaches.

Besides this, let us ask him another Question, Do the Convocation agree among themselves? Have not some Gentlemen fill'd the World with Volumes and learned Tracts on little Matters, relating to Adjournings and Recesses of that Assembly; and that one Difficulty seems not yet Master'd, and how can we expect

expect that Spirit of Candor, that Temper and Peaceable Mind, which is absolutely necessary to bring to pass so great a Blessing as this of a Protestant Union? How can we look for it from an Assembly that cannot Decide their own Controversies, nor Heal their own Breaches.

Upon the whole, it seems to me this Man of Gall has overshot himself, has gone beyond his Commission, and has made a Proposal he had no Authority for, and promised for People that will not perform for him.

Wherefore upon the whole Matter, as we have small Reason to hope for a Reconciliation of Principles, I think the present Business of the Nation is to arrive at a Reconciliation of Parties, a Conjunction of Interests, a General Union of Affection, where there cannot be a Union of Opinions; that the Strife of Parties and Factions may cease, and that Clamour and Contention may be at an end.

Could this be brought to pass, it would really be the greatest Step towards Conjunction in Religious Matters.

First, This would make our Charity extensive, and we should not make it our constant business to Accuse, but Excuse; One Another; Reproachful Terms and Marks of Distinction would die of course; Protestant would

would be the Common Name of all Opinions.
 on God, be prais'd, we are all of One Religion
 in England, tho' we Differ about Methods.
 We pretend to be all Travelling to Heaven,
 tho' we fall out by the Way: and we fall
 out about the Way too: But if every Man
 disturb'd himself less about the Course his
 Neighbours Steers, and concern'd himself more
 about his own, there would more find the
 right Way thither, *as far as Humane Conduct*
is capable of the Voyage to Heaven.

As to the Quakers in England, they are
 Mischievous to the Nation, that they are for
 Tumults and Rebellions, Insurrections, and
 pulling down Monarchy, and Governments;
 enough has been said here and elsewhere to
 leave the Quakers to a fair Debate: but the
 present Case chiefly respects their Interest.
 They are not a Small, nor a Poor Sort in the
 Nation, the only Sort of Interest won't
 be of any use. Men of Estates are never for
 pulling down Houses, Burning Towns, and Ruining
 Nations: 'tis Natural for Trading Men to be
 Vicious to themselves, Men of Desperate
 Fortunes are for Embroiling Kingdoms, and
 setting States and Governments into a Flame.
 The Quakers in England, generally speak-
 ing, are the Men of Trade and Industry; and
 what Estates they have, lye principally in
 Stock of Goods, Hanks, and Credit. No
 Publick

Publick Disaster can befall the Nation, but what affects their Estates more than other Mens; Banks Stocks, Trade Foreign and Domestick, These are the first Things that suffer on any Publick Disorder; and none of those People who are thus Embark'd in Trade, can be properly thought to desire Disasters and Revolutions, because they are generally the first that feel it.

There may indeed be some Men among them that want Principles, and may Act ill, but these are few, and not Remarkable; the generality of the Dissenters must be blind to their own Interests, as well as Enemies to the Government and their Neighbours, when they promote Factions and Divisions in the State.

It may not be amiss to observe in this Case what I Appeal to any Man's Judgment in, besides my own, in the particular Article of Stocks in the City, when the People are uneasy at any Publick Matters, and the Prospect of Affairs looks with an ill Aspect, *the Stocks fall*; again, on the contrary, when they are easie, the Stocks rise, and the Stock-Jobbers frequently Manage such Occasions; and on this Head 'tis observ'd, That in the Case of a certain Bill depending in the House, when the People thought it would be pass'd, Stocks fell; again, when the talk of it began

to be laid aside, as it really was for some time, all Stocks rose in Price: and when it came to a Period, they still advanced again.

Not that I Argue from hence that the Dissenters are the Chief Parties Interessed in the Stocks, for tis plain they are not; but from hence may be seen by any Man who does not put out his own Eyes, the great Benefit of Peace and Union, the Effect it has on Trade, Credit, and the Value of Estates.

Besides, the Author of this Book discovers a Spirit of too much Rancor and Malice, to make it fit to talk with him. I am told he is not an *English*-man; and indeed he seems not to be an *English*-man, by his furious way of treating the *English* Nation at a time when they are all inclin'd to Peace with one another; the least thing can be said of him in this Case is, that he discovers Impotent Rage at a People, who, God be prais'd, are out of his Reach; and the Remnant of his railing Talent may I've either against the Lords who have rejected the *Occasional Bill*, on whom, without doubt, he will plentifully bestow the usual Titles of a Faction, a Party, Low-Church Men, and the like.

Or else he may give himself a Loose at the Queen, who several of his Habit, for we understand he is a Brother of the Gown, have left off to pray for, except at Church, where they

they cannot help it; and as Mr. Wickham has entirely left Her Majesty out of his Grace after Meat, ever since Her Speech to the Houses of Parliament for Peace and Union; so these Gentlemen may be expected with him to give Her Majesty a Cast off their Foul Language as soon as they dare do it.

But one Word with this Gentleman, and then I conclude, and that is about Plotting, for the Dissenters have been his Plotters and his Rebels all along, and have on all Occasions been very roughly handled by him, as to Associations, Treasons, Rebellions, and the like.

Now I would fain desire this Gentleman to tell us a little News about a Plot in Scotland; Her Majesty has given Her Parliament an Account that She has Unquestion'd Information of a Plot in Scotland; for our parts we expected it from the Malignancy of the Party there; but now a Declaration of its Unquestion'd reality from the Throne, has put the Matter of Fact out of Question.

Now as this Gentleman keeps a very good Correspondence there, which appears by his own Writing, I could most earnestly recommend to him to inform the World how many Dissenters, or Presbyterians, there are concerned in it.

10 Without Doubt he can make it appear there are no High-Churchmen in it; for they, Good Men, are of such untainted Principles, as to Loyalty, they are so true to the Doctrine of Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance, that 'tis impossible they can ever be concern'd in any such thing; no, no, it must all go upon the poor Papists; those Roman Catholicks are sad Fellows; they are always plotting, and these Whig and Dissenters they must have a Hand in it; just as this Author says they had in the Fire of London, the Dissenters were indeed very eager to set the Nation in a Flame, when they set Fire to their own Houses to begin it.

03 But alas for us! What shall we say now, if it may be prov'd that there are a great many High-flying Churchmen in this Plot? Then what shall we say? What if there should be Bishops, Non-Jurors, Parsons, and High-Church Episcopalians, Seceders, in this Plot against the Queen and Her Government? What shall we say then? Why, I'll tell you what they will say; they'll say that Presbyterian Tyranny has drove them to such Extremities, that Faith and Blood could bear no longer: To which I shall answer, Not at all, granting the Truth of Fact, that just as much had the Rebels at Marston and Bothwell-Bridge, to say, That Episcopal, Prelatick, Tyranny drove them

them to such Extremities, that Flesh and Blood could bear no longer.

From whence I draw this short Inference, That whether they are Churchmen or Dissenters, one Religion or another, when Men think themselves oppress'd, let their Principles and Pretence be what they will, they will always forget those Pretences; Nature will prevail; they will attempt their Freedom, and seek by Force to resist Force.

Church of England, Church of Rome, Church of Scotland, Church of France, any Church in the World,

Whenever they are Oppress'd, they will Rebel.

But one thing, we must tell these Gentlemen, they differ from their Brother Rebels in, that they have plotted and rebell'd with half the Oppressions and Tyranny as others have done before them.

And if ever these Gentlemen please to compare the Sad and Doleful Sufferings of the Episcopal Dissenters in Scotland, of which they have made so much Noise, with the Miseries, Murders, Plunders, and Barbarous Usage of the Dissenters in Scotland for 30 Years before, it will be easily seen which had the most Cause to cry out of, *Flesh and Blood being able to bear no longer*; and whenever they please to en-

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in, into the Detail of these Things, we are ready to join Issue with them on this Head.

The Author or Authors of this Wolfish Book, would have done well to have taken Advice from a Gentleman of their own Party, and who writes on the same Subject, who has said much more to the Purpose, and in Language much more suitable to common Civility, and good Manners; I mean the Author of a Book, Entitled, *Union to the Church of England, Freely Offer'd, and Earnestly Recommended, to the Dissenters from it, of all Perswasions; but particularly to the Occasional Conformists.*

Now tho' I am of the Opinion that the Arguments that Gentleman makes use of may be answer'd, yet I must acknowledge to his Honour, that while on the one Hand he discovers himself to be of High-Church Principles, yet he shews himself a Man of Temper, a Scholar, and a Gentleman, and if ever he is replied to, ought to be treated accordingly; the Candor with which he treats the Party he writes against, at least deserves this Acknowledgment, that he is the first of that Side that has used them civilly, and is thereby put so much the harder to be confuted, for railing is much larger answer'd than Argument.

I leave Dr. Davenant and to answer those Parts of the Scurrilous Invectives relating

ting to them, which 'tis not so much a Question whether they can, as whether 'tis worth while for them, or any Body else, to reply to so much Railery.

Nor indeed had this been wrote, but to repeat to the World how willing the Dissenters are at all times to enter into the Merits of the Cause, to let the World see the Reasons of their Dissent, and how willing they are upon such Concessions as Reason and Conscience calls for to come to a general Union with their Protestant Brethren, notwithstanding all the Misrepresentation of High-Church Malice to the contrary.

F I N I S.

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